

• Abroad •

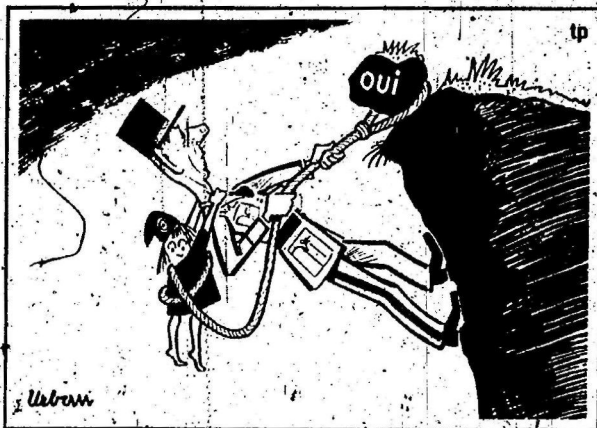
Tunis. The GPRA (Provisional Government of the Algerian Republic—i.e., of Ferhat Abbas and the FLN) is aware of an ironic and delicate problem that has escaped notice in Europe and the United States. Everyone understands how supremely difficult would be the position of the million and a half Europeans in an Algeria wholly independent of and presumptively hostile to France. But few keep in mind that there are nearly a million North African Moslems in metropolitan France. What would happen to them in the event of massive anti-European terror in Algeria?

Brussels. The foreign, particularly the American, press has reported the massive strike movement to be motivated by opposition to the "austerity program" enacted in December by the Van Eyskens government. In reality, that program—a moderate and equitable response to the existing economic situation—was merely seized on as an excuse and cover for a political operation designed to demoralize the nation and overturn the government. In part the sources trace back to the traditional conflict between the Walloons and the Flemish, the Left Socialists of the southern industrial cities and the anti-Marxist Catholics who predominate in the Parliament, the anti-monarchists and those who accept or support the monarchy. But on this occasion there has also been added the active support and in many cases the leadership of Communists who have provoked the crowds into rioting, sabotage and bloodshed, causing a state of almost irreconcilable bitterness.

Geneva. There is a sizable though unvociferous wing of European economists that judges the Belgian general strike to be the augury of a deep general economic depression in the Atlantic community, inclusive of both Western Europe and America. Among other omens are listed the gathering U.S. recession; the dollar crisis; sharp decline in the European auto industry, especially in France and England; increasing tensions in the West German economy; stickiness in international trade; large declines recently in nearly all major stock exchanges.

Bombay. During the second half of 1960, the new anti-Marxist, pro-Western Swatantra Party, headed by Rajakopachari, K. M. Munshi, N. C. Chatterjee and M. R. Masani, extended its organizing activities to nearly all Indian states. The venerable Rajaji traveled widely in Kerala, Madras and elsewhere, and spoke, as is customary for India's recognized sages, to hundreds of thousands. Several novel methods of campaigning have been successfully developed. An Anti-Inflation Day was celebrated simultaneously in hundreds of towns all over the country, with meetings, petitions, resolutions, etc. In the state of Uttar Pradesh, Swatantra leaders toured with "a music party" which opened meetings—averaging 5,000 attendance—with folk songs, and poems describing the troubles of the people resulting from government policies.

Vientiane, Laos. British and French observers have long been convinced of the unwisdom of the American mode of intervention into Laotian affairs. It has, they believe, been much too massive, for one thing: too much money, too many arms, too much personnel for so small a country to absorb usefully. A much smaller army, in small units, trained for jungle and guerrilla fighting and backed by a special internal security force, would have been more suited to the geopolitical realities. Fewer but lasting and more directly appreciable aid projects (roads, small factories, a hospital or two) would have paid sounder economic and political dividends. Both French and British believe that the idea of an actively pro-Western Laos on the border of China and North Vietnam is an absurdity; that a buffer, neutral (not necessarily "neutralist") Laos is the best that can be or could have been hoped for.



London. The leftwing *New Statesman* has in each issue a department called "This England," with three or four quotations illustrating what the editors, and their average reader, accept as an absurd or ludicrous expression of the Establishment (Blimpism). In the issue of January 6, one quote is from a letter to the *Daily Telegraph*: "Among the names of those who support 'unilateral' (or in plainer English, 'one-sided') nuclear disarmament I see some who simultaneously support other strange causes. These include the abolition of capital punishment for murder, abandonment of overseas territories long before they are ready to look after themselves (and regardless of the safety of our compatriots), blind support of the palsied United Nations and denigration of the vital shield of NATO; condonation of homosexual practices, premature release of dangerous lunatics, no corporal punishment for young criminals, sale of near-pornography to all and sundry, suppression of boxing and hunting, and so forth—practically all of which measures could well have been specifically designed by our enemies for our national undoing." The intuitive consistency with which the writer of this letter lists the current manifestations of that abstract humanitarianism which represents the West's impulse toward suicide is exactly matched by the sensitivity with which the abstractly humanitarian editors select it as apt for ridicule.

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